



## THE GARDEN RESOURCE PROGRAM COLLABORATIVE

# RESOURCES *for urban gardeners*

In 2008, **82%** of the community gardens in the Garden Resource Program (GRP) were returning participants, ready to grow again. As hundreds of participants in the GRP demonstrate every year, when gardeners have access to resources and assistance needed to grow thriving gardens, the roots go deeper, the plots expand and the harvests are ever more diverse and abundant. In 2008, the GRP saw the largest jump ever in demand, with over **169 community gardens** (40% increase from 2007), **40 schools** (100% increase) and **359 family gardens** (45% increase) in Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck picking up over **32,320 packets** of seeds and approximately **129,360 DETROIT GROWN** transplants.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

While gardeners love the solitary nature and peace that growing a garden provides in our hectic and stressful urban environment, you would be hard pressed to find many who would pass up an opportunity to talk about their garden; the successes, the challenges, and the growing list of how they will expand and improve next year. The GRP relies on these insightful ideas, observations and inspirations to guide programming and ensure that available resources are appropriate, accessible and meet the real needs of gardeners. In 2008, gardeners actively participated in selecting the resources to fit their needs, from the basic resources to establish new gardens to more advanced tools to maximize production and increase diversity. Gardeners who participated in education classes and cluster events over the course of the season received an abundance of these resources, which translates for some community gardens to over **\$1,750 in resources**.

### SEEDING DIVERSITY

Detroit gardeners have become more than just average backyard tomato growers. Through GRP's extensive array of classes, tours, events and exchange between gardeners, growers of all levels are introduced to new varieties and crops and by popular demand, have made them staples in Detroit's gardens. In 2008, the distribution of crops grew to include fall transplants (brussel sprouts, cauliflower, and late season varieties of cold crops), diverse perennial crops (asparagus and jerusalem artichoke), and onions and potatoes (great crops for storage and/or market sales).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES		
BED PREP & NEW GARDEN SUPPORT		
Site visits	89	site visits
Soil Test	144	tests
Tilling	42	gardens
Raised Beds	53	beds
Compost	352	yards
GARDEN MAINTENANCE		
Tomato Stakes	3800	stakes
Rainbarrel	21	rainbarrels
Row Cover	900	feet
Trellis Net	600	feet
Woodchips	410	yards
Coffee Bags	11500	bags
Tomato Twine	600	feet
Volunteers	2731	hours
Straw	10	bales
BUILDING SOIL/ADV. TECHNIQUES		
Red Worms	3.5	pounds
Cover Crop	75	pounds
Compost Resources	20	pallets
Compost Resources	8	screens
CROP DIVERSITY		
Fruit Trees	53	fruit trees
Jerusalem Artichoke	72	plants
Raspberry/Gooseberry	77	brambles
Onion Plants	6000	plants
Potatoes	175	pounds
Garlic	100	pounds
BEAUTIFICATION & CURB APPEAL		
Art Materials	15	mosaic tiles
Sign	7	signs
Annuals	325	flats
Perennials	750	plants
Bench	7	benches
OTHER		
Canning Supplies	20	boxes of jars
Scales	100	scales



The Greening of Detroit, Detroit Agriculture Network, Earthworks Garden, and Michigan State University work together to support the Garden Resource Program, the Urban Gardening Education Series and Urban Roots. For more information please call Ashley Atkinson at 313-237-8736 or visit [WWW.DETROITAGRICULTURE.ORG](http://WWW.DETROITAGRICULTURE.ORG)



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# EDUCATION *for urban gardeners*

### DETROIT URBAN GARDENING EDUCATION SERIES

With over **41 varieties** of fruits and vegetables distributed throughout the season, even the most experienced gardener may need some guidance with how to properly plan, grow, harvest, store and cook the fruits of their labor. In 2008, over **356 gardeners** took advantage of **46 workshops**, building their skills through the hands-on classes of the Detroit Urban Garden Education Series. Based on gardeners' feedback at the 2007 planning meeting, the emphasis of the classes in 2008 was on building skills in three main areas: improving soil, pest management and maximizing use of garden produce. With a well-rounded schedule of classes emphasizing these themes, participants of all skill levels learned to grow urban spaces into productive, chemical-free, healthy gardens. At working lessons and cluster workdays, basic skills and techniques were shared through hands-on demonstrations and activities in an informal setting that encourage the exchange of local wisdom and experience.

### COOKING CLASSES

One of the most challenging aspects of gardening can be making sure that all of the produce grown makes it to the table. In 2008, the Detroit Urban Garden Education Series included **six cooking classes** aimed at turning the year's harvest into healthy, nutritious, and easy to make meals. These classes featured talented local chefs and recipes made from produce commonly grown in Detroit gardens. The chefs emphasized seasonality and minimal use of sugars and salts.

### NOT JUST GARDENERS...FOOD FOR THOUGHT & FIELD TRIPS

Gardening, by necessity, is more than just a backyard hobby. With our country's drowning economy, failing healthcare system and an unsustainable addiction to oil, it's essential that our community take action to regain control of our food system, starting in our backyards. Through the Food For Thought series and a diversity of other events, gardeners and non-gardeners alike were engaged in discussion about important issues of food security, social justice, and environmental sustainability. Field trips to Toronto and a number of local innovative farms introduced and connected participants to other organizations and initiatives working to address similar issues that we face in Detroit.

### URBAN ROOTS

In the last 4 years, **128 community leaders** have participated in Urban Roots, a 9-week, 45-hour course designed to train leaders in horticulture as well as community gardening skills. In 2008, **34 residents** of Wayne County participated. Urban Roots graduates have consistently gone on to become active leaders in the Garden Resource Program creating and expanding some of the most successful gardens in the city, hosting cluster events, volunteering, and continuing to build their skills in advanced training courses and leadership workgroups.

WORKSHOPS	# ATTENDEES
<b>BASIC GARDENING &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	
Basic Gardening	20
Meet the Brassicas	30
Medicinal Herbs	19
Pest and Weed Prevention	27
Low Tech. Irrigation & Rainbarrel workshops(4)	62
<b>SOIL BUILDING</b>	
Soil Basics	20
Composting (4): lasagna beds, screening & uses, building & materials, turning & curing	60+
Vermicomposting	13
Soil Building and Cover Crops	24
<b>ADVANCED TRAINING &amp; TECHNIQUES</b>	
Starting Seeds Indoors	24
Organic Perennial Fruit Management	62
Advanced Herbs and Beneficials	55
Seed Saving	16
Keep Growing Detroit hoophouse classes(3): preparing seed beds, low tunnels, high tunnels	57
<b>PLANNING &amp; MARKETING</b>	
Planning for Year Round Harvest	21
Planning for Profit	42
<b>COOKING &amp; FOOD PRESERVATION</b>	
Cooking Classes (6)	92
Canning	21
<b>OTHER</b>	
Art in the Garden	16
Detroit's Edible Ecology Herb Walk	15
Small Engine Repair & Tool Maintenance	13



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# CONNECTION *between urban gardeners*

### A CITY THAT GROWS TOGETHER

If you traveled through the city on a garden tour meeting gardeners along the way, you would quickly learn about their diverse ideas, inspirations and goals and see how this diversity is reflected in their gardens. Digging a little deeper, you would learn about the other great work and initiatives these individuals and organizations are involved in. The Garden Resource Program (GRP) celebrates the diversity of gardens, recognizes their unique needs, and highlights the important resources and connections these groups and individuals bring to the table. In 2008, an estimated **2,078 adults & 7,790 youth** gardeners, from over **185 organizations**, block clubs, businesses, neighborhood groups, churches and schools participated in the GRP. The GRP facilitates activities and events on both citywide and local levels to ensure that these groups are connected to one another and taking advantage of the extensive network of existing resources, innovative ideas, lessons learned and support in our gardening community. The citywide activities and events, including community potlucks, farmers' markets & tours keep participants connected and engaged in Detroit's growing local food movement. Neighborhood (cluster) events help keep the program decentralized and appropriate to the needs of Detroit's diverse areas.

### GROWING LOCAL

As the urban agriculture community in our city grows, chances are most residents are only a few blocks away from their nearest backyard gardening allies and less than a mile away from the nearest community garden. For participants of the GRP, these local connections are not only encouraging, but for many, a necessity. Whether it's local access to resources, a ride to an educational event or garden to learn from, the GRP's cluster groups bring gardeners together to build a strong local network of resources, education and support. Since 2006, GRP's cluster groups have grown from the ground up. Each cluster has local leadership and the support of an established community or school garden to provide basic support to gardeners, but a cluster is only as strong as the gardeners who actively participate in the group. In 2008, **62% of community gardens** were active participants in their cluster, attending resource meetings, participating in shared workdays, taking on leadership roles and getting to know one another at social events. The cluster events held throughout the season all featured educational themes to share basic techniques and introduce more advanced practices. The practical skill sharing between gardeners at cluster workdays provided not only hands-on experience with techniques, but also an opportunity for gardeners to share their skills with one another.



Cluster Event	Education	Resources Distributed	Attendance
Spring Additional Resource Meeting	Bed preparation & soil testing	Asparagus, Jerusalem Artichoke, Onions, Potatoes	220
Spring Cluster Workday	Bug Hunt! Common pests in the garden	Row cover (for pest control), Straw (for mulch), Tomato twine	124
Summer Cluster BBQ	Harvest as you Grow! Harvest & storage tips	Row cover (for season extension)	157
Fall Cluster Workday	Fall Gardening: putting garden to bed, building lasagna beds, planting garlic	Garlic, Straw (for garlic), Lasagna bed materials, Flower bulbs	156

Participation in these cluster events also made participating gardeners eligible for many other resources throughout the season (see resource page).



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# LEADERSHIP *Grown in Detroit*

### FARMERS' MARKET WORKGROUP – GROWN IN DETROIT

In 2008, the Farmers' Market workgroup continued to work toward increasing access to fresh, local, and delicious produce throughout Detroit, while simultaneously improving the knowledge and experience of gardeners interested in marketing their produce. In their third year, the workgroup expanded the Grown in Detroit (GID) cooperative by engaging new marketers. In 2007, 30 gardens sold produce with GID. Through outreach carried out by workgroup members at 2008 seed and transplant distributions, this number jumped to **47 gardens**, representing **over 12% of GRP gardens**. Workgroup members are typically active, experienced marketers and encourage and support these new marketers by educating them about the GID cooperative process, quality standards, packaging, pricing, and many other aspects of selling that may seem like roadblocks to beginners. GID participated in **13 more** market dates this year than last year and more than doubled gross sales from last year making collectively **\$14,668** in 2008. 100% of these profits go back to gardeners, building a local economy that connects Detroit products to Detroiters, keeping dollars circulating in our community. Marketers in their second or third year of selling added to their experience this year by selling as individuals at Eastern market, preparing for the future when they will be growing enough produce to fill a market table for most or all of the season on their own. Because of this year's expanded market schedule at seven different sites across the city, GID was able to connect with a greater diversity of customers from the Detroit area. Marketers love educating these customers about the food they grow, how to prepare it, the gardens it is grown in, and the work that our community is doing to build a community-driven food system. Customers frequently cannot believe that Detroit is growing so much food and marketers gladly inform them that the produce on our table represents a small fraction of the amount being grown in Detroit.

### YOUTH GROWING DETROIT

New in 2008, Youth Growing Detroit (YGD) is a series of training, networking, and marketing opportunities coordinated by The Greening of Detroit and EarthWorks Urban Farm designed to support youth working in urban gardens and their adult leaders. This year seven different groups made up of **61 youth** and **11 adults**, participated in YGD. Participants attended two summits in the spring where youth had the opportunity to network with other youth doing similar work and to tour each others' gardens as well as learn important skills like direct marketing techniques for fruits and vegetables, customer service, and managing money. At their own gardens youth worked to grow, harvest, and pack their produce then at market put their new skills to the test by taking on a lot of responsibility in helping run the Grown in Detroit cooperative table. Their efforts played a part in Grown in Detroit being able to staff multiple markets per week and sometimes two markets on one day. Not only did participants learn valuable lessons about responsibility, how to have fun while working, and what kale is, they also received a t-shirt with their garden's design on it and a stipend for the hours they spent working at the market.

FARMERS' MARKET WORKGROUP	
Workgroups Participants	15
Workgroup Meetings	7 in 2008
Gardens Participating in Farmers' Markets	47 (avg. 7.4/mkt)
Youth Growing Detroit Participants	7 groups
Total Youth Involved	61
Volunteers per market	7
Total Farmers' Markets	43, 7 sites
Gross Income	\$14,668
Independent Sellers	5



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# LEADERSHIP *gardeners closing the loop*

### COMPOST WORKGROUP

The goal of this gardener-driven workgroup, which began in 2006, is to create a more sustainable local source for gardeners to fulfill their soil fertility needs, to educate gardeners of all levels about composting and to collectively work to divert organic materials from Detroit's municipal waste stream. The Garden Resource Program's (GRP) Compost Workgroup maintains a community composting pilot project at Hope Takes Root garden that demonstrates an appropriately-scaled open pile system as well as lasagna bed composting. In 2008, the group worked diligently to measure and evaluate the project, keeping track of the amount of organic waste diverted, the time spent on maintenance (one day/month from each workgroup member), the temperatures of the pile, and the compost produced (which nearly doubled this year). The pilot project site also acted as a switchboard to divert organic materials from the waste stream and connect gardeners to large quantities of brew waste, bunny manure, leaves, and straw to start or build up their own compost piles. Along with these activities, the compost workgroup took a leadership role in sharing their experiences and skills with new aspiring composters, hosting a four-part series on composting topics in the Education Series, providing materials and technical assistance to help establish five additional composting sites with community gardeners, and leading the lasagna bed demonstrations at fall cluster workdays.

COMPOST WORKGROUP	
Workgroup participants	15
Annual working meetings	5
Composting education classes	4
Pilot project volunteers/ education participants	57
New community composting sites (support from workgroup)	5
Tons organic waste diverted	25
Yards of compost produced 07-08	10.2
Pallets distributed	20



### SEED SAVING PROJECT

From locally grown garlic seed to Detroit-made compost, the Garden Resource Program makes every effort possible to close the loop and encourage use of locally available resources. In 2008, the Seed Saving Project was initiated to increase the percentage of seeds grown locally for distribution through the Garden Resource Program. Beginning with two trial plots hosted at Catherine Ferguson Academy the Seed Saving Project grew and harvested 'Provider' beans and 'Cherokee Purple' tomatoes. The trials of 'Cherokee Purple' successfully produced over 300% of what is needed for 2009 distribution. Through classes and volunteer opportunities to help with the seed saving plots, over 25 participants learned the valuable skills of seed saving, which can save money, be profitable as a value added product, and help gardeners develop healthy strains of plants that are acclimated to our climate and growing conditions.



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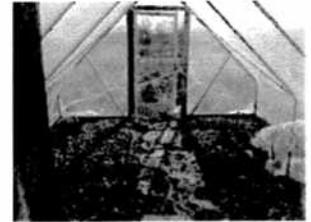
## THE GARDEN RESOURCE PROGRAM COLLABORATIVE

# ADVANCED TRAINING

*for urban gardeners*

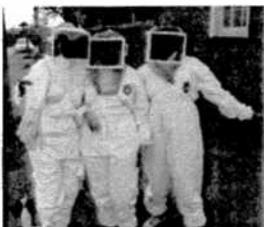
### KEEP GROWING DETROIT

Now in its second year, the KEEP GROWING DETROIT (KGD) Season Extension Project is designed to equip gardeners with the skills and tools needed to extend their growing season from 6 months to a more productive 8-10 months. In 2008, KGD had a series of **11 classes** totaling **26 hours** in training. Through the course of the season **23 active KGD gardeners** learned all aspects of season extension from planning/planting dates and variety selection to using simple tools such as row cover and more advanced tools such as lowtunnels and hoophouses. To date KGD has supported gardeners in building **6 hightunnels** and **19 lowtunnels**. These gardeners were busy harvesting carrots, greens, radishes and lettuce when there was snow on the ground early this spring, proving especially valuable to market gardeners who were able to begin selling earlier in the season. At participating school gardens, the utilization of season extension techniques allowed teachers to expand the use of their unique outdoor classrooms beyond the typical growing season and in better coordination with the school year calendar.



### SWEET ON DETROIT

Urban beekeeping is important for biodiversity and essential to growing thriving gardens, as bees are responsible for the pollination of most crops. And as the participants of the Sweet on Detroit (SOD) Beekeeping program will tell you, it's also an exciting and profitable skill! Now in its second year, SOD's Bee-ginner series of classes provided **21 gardeners** with the hands-on skills to start and maintain **11 working hives** with **18 hours** of training on building structures, caring for bees and harvesting and processing honey. New in 2008, the SOD Bee Mentors (graduates from the 2007 class) coached bee-ginners in **20+ hands-on** sessions, working on hives at community garden sites across the city. These mentors also continued to hone their own skills with the Advanced Bees series of education classes, which introduced topics such as value added products, splitting and combining hives and the importance of incorporating nectar plants.



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